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Cleveland Chamber of  
Commerce...

Industrial betterment in  
Cleveland

[Cleveland?]

[1902?]

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INDUSTRIAL BETTERMENT IN CLEVELAND.

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#### INDUSTRIAL COMMITTEE

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W. H. Moulton  
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F. F. Prentiss  
Howard J. Strong, Secretary

#### PREFATORY NOTE.

The Industrial Committee of The Cleveland Chamber of Commerce seeks to encourage and assist factories and stores in the carrying out of plans tending to better the condition and surroundings of the wage earner, to make his labor more effective and to bring about a relation between employer and employe which is something besides that of wage payer and wage earner.

This pamphlet contains a description with illustrations of the methods advocated by this committee. The following are among the plans adopted:

*General Improvement* in the environment and surroundings of workmen being of greatest importance;

*Clean Windows and Floors*, light and well ventilated work-rooms and adequate sanitary arrangements, forming the basis of all further improvements. These are usually of small expense, but of great effectiveness;

*Dressing-rooms* in which employes may remove clothing worn in the shop and don that which they can with self-respect wear in the street or in the car. In these are often found:

*Individual Lockers* of wood, or iron or steel wire,

*Toilet Facilities*, including well equipped lavatories,

*Baths*, both shower and tub, where the nature of the work is such as to make them advisable;

*Lunch-rooms*, in which the employe can eat the lunch brought from home or

*Restaurants*, where meals are furnished at cost by the firm;

*Rest-rooms*, where employes may go after lunch or in case of sudden illness;

*Reading-rooms and Libraries*, usually in connection with the rest rooms;

*Mutual Benefit Associations* in which the payment of regular dues on the part of the members—a sum often increased by contributions from the firm—insures, in case of illness or death, a benefit to the men or to their families;

*Entertainments and Suppers* given by the firm;

*Prizes* for suggestions as to the business or for long and faithful service;

*Outings and Picnics, and Classes* in various subjects pertaining to the business.

March, 1920 - C. R. W.

#### A PRESENT DAY PROBLEM.

The introduction of machinery and the consequent centralization of labor has brought with it new industrial conditions which in turn impose new duties and obligations upon both capital and labor.

When large numbers of men work together under one management, the intimate association formerly existing between employer and employed is impossible. Misunderstandings arise concerning questions not confined altogether to the matter of wages, but involving as well the principles and management of business. It seems necessary that plans be adopted adequate to deal with these complicated conditions and such as have a tendency to establish a common ground of good will. That which is done must recognize the rights of both the investor and of the wage earner. The spirit of the times demands that the wage earner be treated with fairness and that capital receive a legitimate return for all investments. The proprietor who does not give careful consideration to the perfecting of machines and processes falls behind in the commercial race. The proprietor who does not seriously study the relation of his men to his own success is short sighted, to say nothing of the trusteeship for which he must be held to account. In other words there is a growing belief in the efficacy of such plans as take into consideration the value of the individual in the industrial development. Many proprietors show their belief in this theory by providing wage earners with conveniences and comforts which enable them to make the very best use of their abilities and opportunities. Results seem generally to



show that this may be adopted as a business policy, and it is quite certain that better citizenship follows from the practice.

It is no new undertaking for individual firms to adopt these methods, but a "City Movement," at the initiative and under the direction of a chamber of commerce representing all the chief commercial and industrial interests of a twentieth century city, is something new under the sun.

#### ORGANIZED MOVEMENT IN CLEVELAND.

During the last few years many of the city's prominent business men have become interested in practical experiments for the betterment of the condition of working men. This interest took the form of a resolution introduced at a meeting of The Chamber of Commerce, October 17, 1899, setting forth the importance of such a movement and recommending that a committee be appointed to investigate the conditions then existing in the factories and stores of Cleveland. This was adopted, a committee of seven appointed, and a secretary secured to devote his entire time to the work.

This is the only city in the world, so far as is known, in which the work has been undertaken by a commercial organization. For this reason it has been watched with great interest. Employers and professional men, not only in Cleveland but in many other cities, are constantly inquiring as to the methods of work and the success achieved. During the last two years and a half, plans already in operation have been enlarged, and new work has been entered upon. At the present time there are more than seventy establishments that have undertaken some special plans for the benefit of the wage earners.

#### GOOD HEALTH.

One of the most important features of the work of the committee is that of encouraging the maintenance of proper health conditions. This covers the matter of cleanliness of shops and work rooms, which, in the crowded business section, is sometimes a perplexing problem. The present attempt to do away with the smoke nuisance will be of much assistance. Laborers



employed in a comparatively pure atmosphere, are capable of greater and better effort than if at work under different conditions. The value of whitewash and water-paint as cleansing and renewing agents as well as a safeguard against fire cannot be over-estimated. In some lines of business, attention to matters of health is of immediate and vital importance; this is particularly true of those establishments in which there is some

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danger of sickness because of the nature of the work. The Billings-Chapin Company, manufacturer of paint, has for several years employed a physician who makes periodical visits to the works, examining every man. Formerly employes were frequently ill from the effects of the chemicals, but since this plan has been in operation, a whole year has been known to pass without a case of serious illness. The general health of the men has also been much improved, owing to the constant care given them, which makes possible the discovery of disease and illness in its incipient stage and the immediate application of remedies.

#### IMPROVED DRESSING ROOMS.

It is frequently the case that a laborer going to and from his work upon the street or in a car is obliged to wear clothing which is unfit for any use but that of the shop, and for the reason simply that there is no opportunity at his place of work to care for clean clothing. The problem is solved in many of our establishments by the provision of dressing rooms and lockers for the accommodation of those who wish to make the change. Sometimes these consist of single or double cupboards upon the walls; in other cases wood lockers with wire-covered openings for ventilation and with inclined tops so that they may not become a lodging place for refuse, are provided.

The most modern locker is of expanded steel or steel wire, which, except for unusually dirty or dusty places, is by far the best, both for cleanliness, ventilation and for the ease with which it can be cared for. The Cleveland Twist Drill Company recently equipped its factory with these lockers, and Goldsmith, Joseph, Feiss & Company, manufacturers of clothing, have adopted them for their factory.

H. R. Hatch & Company also have their store equipped with fine lavatories and locker rooms for both men and women, a separate locker being provided for each employee.

The dressing room of the Cleveland Bag Factory is equipped with small porcelain sinks and ventilated wardrobes. The room is in the constant care of a matron, and no one is

permitted to enter during working hours without a permit from his or her foreman. The rooms thus equipped permit the wearing of clean clothing to and from work and arouse and foster a feeling of self-respect.



#### TOILET FACILITIES.

Closely allied to the matter of dressing rooms are the toilet rooms and lavatories. Too often improper toilet arrangements have been the cause of much discomfort, ill-health and, in some cases, disease. Much attention is being given to this matter through the influence of the factory inspector and through the example now set by many of the representative establishments of our city. In these toilet rooms, the washing facilities, more perhaps than any other one improvement in factory conditions, furnish a stimulus to self-respect and increase the desire to make the best of one's circumstances.

Many establishments are putting in lavatories adjacent to their working rooms, of sufficient size to furnish a washing place with plenty of fresh water for all employees, thus enabling the

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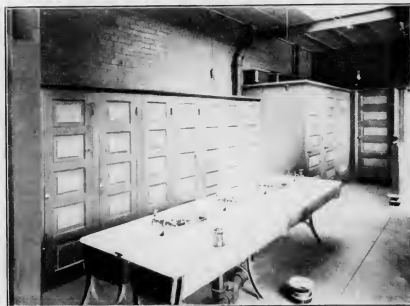
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men to secure a car at the close of the day's work without a long delay and permitting their reaching home at an earlier hour in a cleanly and invigorated condition.

The May Company has seen the advantages of this work and has well arranged toilet rooms, lavatories and separate locker rooms for men and women.

The Cleveland Twist Drill Company, some little time ago, took out all of the old sinks having but a single faucet and replaced them with improved metal sinks with numerous faucets, making them convenient to all departments.

The Park National Bank has a splendidly furnished toilet room with individual lockers, lavatories and shower baths. A unique feature of its equipment is found in various kinds of gymnasium apparatus, including punching bag, dumb bells and weights.

#### BATHS.

Bath rooms are a useful adjunct to these toilet rooms and indispensable in some cases. For men the shower bath is found to be the most successful in industrial establishments.

The Sherwin-Williams Company, manufacturer of paint and varnish, was one of the first in the city to introduce plans for industrial betterment, and among very many excellent features of this establishment one of the greatest in value is the shower baths for both men and women. In the dry color department the use of the daily bath is compulsory. All employees in this department are furnished each morning, a pair of clean overalls and a jumper, two suits being worn in winter and one in summer, the clean one always next to the wearer.

Before these plans were adopted the average length of service before becoming ill from lead poisoning was less than eight weeks, and when the men quit work because of illness they generally did not return. Since this system has been in force, however, there has not been a single case of chemical poisoning of any one regularly employed in that department. The value of this to the company as well as to the men cannot be over-estimated.

It is in the introduction of such essentials that the committee has been particularly interested. The Cleveland Twist Drill Company placed three shower baths in its tempering department, allowing the men to bathe each day on the company's time, and these were so much appreciated that the men took a bath on their own time before going home, while all through the summer the foreman came early and took a cold bath before going to work. Men in whose homes the bathing facilities are limited found this plan of great value.



LUNCH ROOMS.

Many firms have felt the need of providing some place in which the men who bring their own lunch might eat it under better conditions than usually surround those obliged to use the shop for this purpose, where they often sit on old boxes, machines, or merchandise, and usually without the formality of washing up. Rooms have been set aside for this purpose in a number of factories and stores so that the employees could gather around tables, a few together or in a large group, as preferred.

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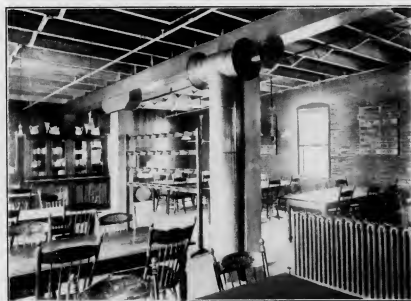
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Provision has been made for serving tea and coffee, and the room has been made home-like by the application of paint, paper and the furnishing of curtains, pictures and other decorations. These decorations are usually of small cost, but are far reaching in their effect, often giving suggestions for an improved home life.

A need of those who are unable to go outside and buy a meal is thus supplied, and many companies have done this who could not well furnish prepared food to their employees. When food is eaten in the shop usually there is little care exercised; the refuse is scattered about and habits of carelessness are often acquired, thus frequently affecting the work upon which the men are employed, and in some measure being responsible for a lower standard of work. Goldsmith, Joseph, Feiss & Company have well equipped rooms and the employees pay ten cents a week for tea and coffee. Unusual care has been taken by them in painting and decorating these rooms, and a wholesome influence is exerted on those who occupy them. The men are also furnished with a smoking room.

The W. P. Southworth Company has a lunch room in which the clerks can eat their lunch, tea and coffee being served at the expense of the company. A pleasant feature, and a very valuable one is, that at any time a teamster on coming in from a cold or wet drive, can go to the lunch room and secure a cup of hot coffee. It is difficult to over-estimate the value of such a feature.

#### RESTAURANT PLANS.

A number of employers have been able so to extend their plans that in addition to furnishing desirable rooms in which the employees can eat their lunch, suitable food is provided at cost. Tables and seats are supplied and the employee may bring his own lunch and eat it with the others, he may bring part and purchase some extras or, if he prefers, he may procure his entire meal from the company. Several establishments furnish tea and coffee. In a number of these, the average cost of the lunch is about ten cents and is somewhat as follows:

Soup, two and three cents; roast meats, three to six cents; potatoes, one cent; beef stew, three cents; Hamburg steak, two cents; sandwiches, two cents; puddings, three cents; pies, three and five cents; tea and coffee, one cent.

The companies having the best success with these restaurants are those who serve a variety of food from day to day and at a price within the means of those who labor for small wages.

The Sherwin-Williams Company has two well furnished lunch rooms. Tea and coffee, soup and some other warm dish is



served without charge. The employees can bring their own lunch from home and, with the food served by the company, a warm and wholesome meal is obtained at a very small expense. The majority of the men prefer to buy food of the company at about cost, and do not bring anything from home.

The Halle Bros. Company has almost the entire upper floor of its new building devoted to accommodations for its employees. The lunch room is managed entirely by the Employees' Association and the salaries of the kitchen and dining room attendants are paid from the treasury of the association. About eighty per

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cent of the employes of the company take advantage of this lunch room.

The Cleveland Twist Drill Company has a dining room in which its employes meet at the noon hour. They can eat the food brought from home or buy of the company at cost such food as they may desire. The average of about one hundred and sixty dinners is ten cents. As is the case in most of these places, certain men are delegated for a short length of time to go to the dining room about ten minutes before the noon hour, to assist in the arrangement of the tables and to have the food ready when the men come from their work, each man serving from six to ten others. The orders are given during the morning or at noon the day before to the men appointed and by them are delivered at the kitchen. The furnishing of hot food and coffee has a tendency to satisfy that desire for stimulating beverages which, if gratified frequently, would unfit a man for his work. There is probably no other plan requiring so much care in its introduction and maintenance, but it is certainly an advantage to the men to have proper and well cooked food, and the effect is possibly of greater value than is often realized.

In one case a middle aged man who had for many years taken his noon lunch at saloons, worn poor clothing and gone without many things desirable, appeared after a few months' patronage of the shop restaurant, with a new suit of working clothes. A little later he came to his work on a bicycle, both of which he said had been paid for from money saved by not going to the saloon.

In several instances the saloon patronage in the vicinity of those shops with restaurant facilities has materially fallen off. This plan is of especial benefit in those parts of the city in which there are few good lunch rooms.

#### REST ROOMS.

Closely connected with the lunch and dining rooms are the rest rooms which have been established in a number of factories and stores. It is of great benefit, especially during inclement weather, to have a place in which the employes can gather after lunch and spend the time profitably. These rooms are furnished



with tables, easy chairs, couches and in many cases are tastefully painted and decorated, making them homelike and attractive. In the factory, rattan furniture has been found preferable, since it is the most easily kept clean. The rooms have games of various kinds which tend to break up the monotony of the daily life and in a number, smoking is permitted. The Cleveland Twist Drill Company and The Cleveland Hardware Company have each a piano for their employes and good use of it is made during the noon hour.

The rest rooms are also at the disposal of the employes when ill. It is often the case in factories employing women that someone is taken ill, but with this room provided a woman may lie down and rest and with some simple remedies at hand be able to return to work, whereas without this opportunity she would have been obliged to go home, thus losing her pay for the day. The company would also lose the product of her work, often a serious inconvenience and a fact which is apt to cause lack of consideration on the part of the employer. Meetings and entertainments of varied character, also, are frequently arranged for at the noon hour.

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interested in providing conveniences for their men and have arranged comfortable waiting rooms at the various stations where the men have spare time. In connection with the waiting rooms, recreation rooms have been established, fitted up with billiard and pool tables, and in some instances with bowling alleys.

All these things have a tendency to bring a little relaxation and enjoyment to laborers during the working hours which make up such a large part of their lives. The proprietor of one establishment said that his men preferred not to loaf around the street and in objectionable places at the noon hour, and that he did not know of anything better than to provide facilities such as would permit them to spend their spare moments in profitable reading or recreation.

#### READING ROOMS.

In the rest and recreation rooms are usually found tables supplied with the daily and weekly papers, monthly magazines, books, etc. The reading rooms have in some cases been sup-



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Several firms have arranged entertainments at noon or in the evening for their employees. The Sherwin-Williams Company has a large club room which is also used for the annual convention of agents and salesmen. The company has from time to time an entertainment at the noon hour, given sometimes by its own employes and at other times by outside talent.

Charles Eisenman & Company have a piano for their rest room and have frequent entertainments. They were the first to introduce a series of monthly suppers given to the employes at the close of work, followed by some entertainment and dancing.

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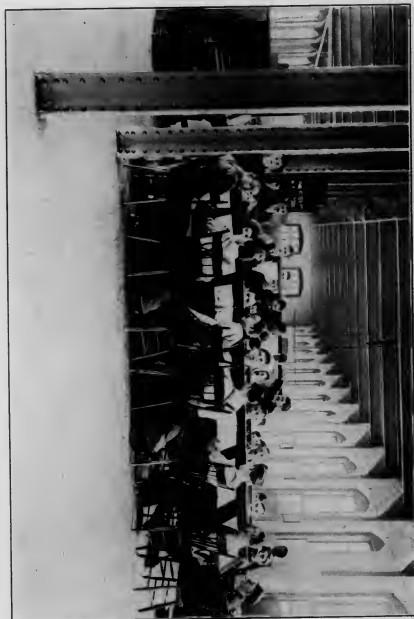
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At the opening of its new building, The Cleveland Hardware Company gave an entertainment to its employes and friends. Refreshments were served and the evening was spent in vocal and instrumental music and dancing. Such occasions when engaged in to a moderate degree serve to develop friendly relations between the proprietor and his men and have proven of much benefit.

The Cleveland Twist Drill Company has established evening classes in Mechanical Drawing, Arithmetic and English and from one hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty men are meeting twice a week, shortly after the close of their work. The company pays all expenses, including that of four competent instructors; the course of instruction and direction of the work are in charge of the Young Men's Christian Association.

An extension of the idea of the rest room is found in a plan recently adopted by The Cleveland Hardware Company. The nature of the work in this plant is such as to occasion many accidents and to provide for these a small room has been fitted up as a hospital. This room is furnished in white and is, of course, kept scrupulously clean. It is furnished with chairs, a

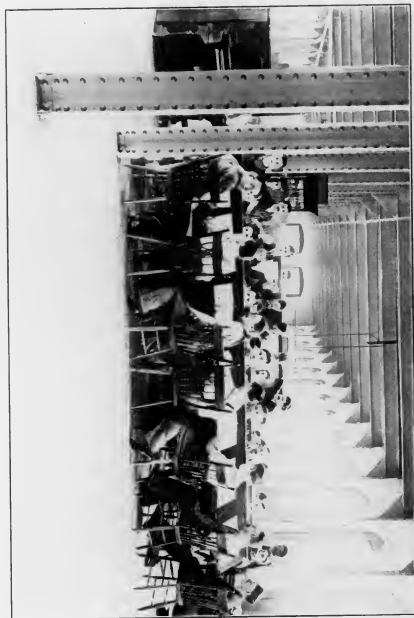




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rattan couch, rubber and woolen blankets and a small glass top table with bowls for cleansing and antiseptic purposes, while upon shelves are medicines, restoratives and bandages of various sizes. The key is kept in the superintendent's office and he being something of an amateur doctor, attends to all injuries. A stretcher, for immediate use, is kept available at all times. There are also provided throughout the factory boxes filled with clean cotton bandages, thus avoiding the danger of blood poisoning which would arise from the use of some dirty or greasy rag.



#### SUGGESTIONS.

Prizes for the best suggestions concerning methods, machinery or manufacture have been given by several concerns, The Cleveland Hardware Company and The Cleveland Twist Drill Company each paying out \$100.00 every six months for such as have been of the greatest benefit. In this way the men are encouraged to think and to make themselves of the greatest possible value to their employers. In several other establishments suggestions are encouraged and proper recognition made in advancement and increase of wages.

#### MUTUAL BENEFIT ASSOCIATIONS.

Mutual Benefit Associations have been in existence among the employes of a number of companies for several years; that of the White Sewing Machine Company, organized in 1878, has been in successful operation since that date. They are usually organized and controlled entirely by the employes, and for the payment of from forty to fifty cents a month, a sum which is hardly missed, a benefit of five or six dollars a week is paid to them in case of illness or injury which prevents them from attending to their work. In the event of death a sum sufficient to pay the funeral expenses is provided. The money is paid to the beneficiary at intervals when he most needs it and often prevents much suffering and deprivation which would otherwise prevail, and it has proven of great benefit. The care exercised by the society over its members tends to promote kindlier relations among the men and a more friendly feeling towards their employers. The committee believes this plan permits of almost universal adoption in establishments employing seventy-five men or more.

The Cleveland Hardware Company has a very successful organization, ninety-two per cent of the men employed being members of the association. The following semi-annual statement indicates the value of this plan:

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## RECEIPTS

Cash on Hand.....	\$ 74.50
Six Months' Dues.....	859.42
Cash from Outside Members.....	49.70
Clock Fines from June 15, 1901, to Jan. 11, 1902.....	15.00
Interest on \$900 from Aug. 15, 1901, to Feb. 15, 1902.....	27.00
	<u>\$1,025.62</u>

## DISBURSEMENTS.

Sick Benefits .....	\$609.70
Two Deaths .....	250.00
Hall Rent .....	3.50
Printing .....	26.00
Two Doctor Calls .....	2.00
Framing two Resolutions.....	2.50
Engrossing two Resolutions.....	10.00
Flowers .....	5.00
Coach Hire one Funeral.....	4.00
Cigars Smoked at Dec. 7, 1901, Meeting.....	1.35
Secretary and Treasurer Bonds.....	7.35
	<u>921.40</u>

## SUMMARY

Receipts .....	\$1,025.62
Disbursements .....	<u>921.40</u>
Balance in Commercial Account.....	104.22
Savings Account with Interest.....	1,015.67
Deposited with C. H. Co. at 6 per cent.....	900.00
	<u>\$2,019.89</u>

In a number of instances the companies have made a contribution to the association to insure its successful operation, and a few contribute a certain amount on the death of a member. The W. P. Southworth Company has for a long time contributed each month an amount equal to that paid in by the members, who pay 25 cents a month and in case of death it pays into the funds of the association \$25.00 towards the funeral expenses. The American Ship Building Company and the City Forge & Iron Company have an insurance that pays a certain sum in case of injury or death.

Some degree of permanency in a position has a tendency to produce a spirit of loyalty which results in increased usefulness. Many firms provide for this by setting aside a fund in co-operation with their employees to provide additional benefits in old age or after a long term of service.



GARDENING.

The work of the committee covers, also, the matter of improvements in factory surroundings. Much may be done at a very small cost to make the factory surroundings more conducive to interested service and the result is equally good in the home. It has been practically demonstrated that a whole section of the city may be altered at an astonishingly small cost, making an unsightly neighborhood clean and attractive. The effect of this upon the inhabitants, upon the property and upon the city as a whole cannot be over-estimated. Goldsmith, Joseph, Feiss & Company and The Cleveland Worsted Mills have well kept lawns about their works, and flower beds that serve to make the surroundings attractive throughout the season. This is true also of the grounds of the Ohio Brass & Iron Mfg. Company, the Cleveland City Railway Company, The Cleveland Varnish Company and the Union Steel Screw Company.

One of the best examples in the country of this work is that which has been undertaken by the Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company, of this city. For a number of years the company has awarded prizes for the best kept grounds at Ishpeming, Michigan, where

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several of its mines are located. The conditions usually existing in a mining district are very bad and the lives of the people reflect the character of their home surroundings. Ishpeming is a model mining town with houses of varied designs well painted and in good repair. The grounds are well kept, and during the summer whole sections of the city are made beautiful by the friendly competition aroused through prizes offered by the company. It is difficult to estimate the value of such an effort in the lives of the people.



VENTILATION.

The Cleveland Hardware Company has put into its rolling mill a fan which furnishes a large volume of fresh air to the men at their work, while the mill is run with three shifts of eight hours each instead of two shifts of twelve hours. Formerly men were frequently overcome by the heat and in summer could work only a short time before being obliged to leave and obtain fresh air, but since the introduction of this plan not one has been prostrated.

The men can work steadily and because of this are able to produce almost as much in eight hours as they formerly did in twelve.

#### OUTINGS.

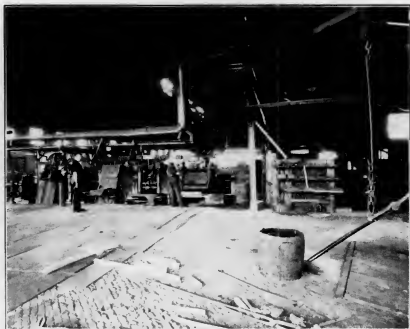
Outings in the summer are now becoming common and many manufacturing establishments and stores during the past season closed their places of business for one day, which was spent pleasantly in recreation.

The Osborn Manufacturing Company gives its employees a day during the summer for a picnic, paying full wages for this time; the Sherwin-Williams Company and the Cleveland Twist Drill Company also give picnics to their employees, while the Benefit Association of the Cleveland Hardware Company conducts a day's outing for its members. Such a feature is commendable in that it seems to break up the monotony of the daily toil and brings the different elements of the business into a more intimate relation.

Many other plans are in operation in various establishments among which may be mentioned the following, which are of more particular interest:



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The Sherwin-Williams Company has adopted the plan of giving a gold watch for twenty-five years' continuous service, a distinction recently received by three employees.

Storage quarters are frequently arranged for bicycles together with a supply of air for inflating tires. The Cleveland Twist Drill Company has given especial attention to this matter, and in a new building now being erected for the company, a part of the basement is to be fitted up expressly for this use.

The employees of the Cleveland Hardware Company organized an orchestra which meets every Monday evening for practice under competent instruction. This has been of much interest to the men and their work has been very gratifying. The Cleveland Twist Drill Company has also an orchestral organization.

During the winter, banquets to their employees have been given by a number of employers. The Sherwin-Williams Company for three seasons has used The Chamber of Commerce Hall for this purpose, holding the banquet at the close of the annual convention when all representatives of the company were at the home office.

In the adoption of these plans as in the case of any other business method it must be remembered that immediate results cannot be expected. A readjustment of attitude of both employer and men is often necessary and is usually of slow development.

Moreover the innovation should, in many cases, be undertaken gradually. The introduction of restaurant plans for instance is one of the last things to be attempted, since this is among the most difficult of successful accomplishment, and its failure often results in the abandonment of the whole scheme.

It is not to be expected that the methods set forth in these pages, present a complete solution of the labor problem or that in them will be found a panacea for all industrial ills; but results tend to show that this is a step in the right direction and the committee believes that the persistent application of the methods suggested will result in a higher standard of intelligence and efficiency and in a better relation between employer and employe.

**END OF  
TITLE**